

System Configuration Team (SCT)

**Meeting Notes
July 15, 2004**

Greetings and Introductions.

The July 15 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held at the National Marine Fisheries Service offices in Portland, Oregon. The meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin of NMFS. The agenda and a list of attendees for the meeting are attached as Enclosures A and B. Silverberg led a round of introductions and a review of the agenda.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced may be too lengthy to routinely include with the meeting notes; copies of all enclosures referred to in the minutes are available upon request from Kathy Ceballos of NMFS at 503/230-5420.

2. FFDRWG Update.

No FFDRWG update was presented at today's meeting; Hevlin noted that the next Walla Walla District FFDRWG meeting is set for August 18-19. Kim Fodrea noted that a special FFDRWG meeting was held last Friday to discuss the McNary modernization testing; David Wills said that, at that meeting, the decision was made not to proceed with further testing this summer.

There was also a meeting at The Dalles yesterday, said Wills, essentially an information and brainstorming session to get everyone on the same page regarding the Corps' thinking about The Dalles behavioral guidance screen (BGS) – the physical and mechanical possibilities of what type of BGS design might be appropriate for that project. The salmon managers at that meeting suggested that 2004 biological data might help focus the BGS design, said Wills; The Dalles is a unique configuration, in terms of fish movement through the project. In response to a question, John Kranda said the intent of the BGS is to improve fish guidance through spill at The Dalles, yielding the potential that greater passage and spillway survival could be achieved even if spill was reduced. He said Norm Tolonen and Mike Langslay are the Corps leads on The Dalles BGS project; he suggested that anyone with questions contact them directly.

Wills said a wide array of options were discussed, from fabric curtains to steel plates, from shallow configurations to deep ones. The bottom line is that the salmon managers would like to wait to see what the 2004 biological information provides before focusing on a potentially very expensive prototype. No decisions were made at the meeting, Wills added. Are they discussing a surface bypass structure as well? Ron Boyce asked. In a tangential way, Wills replied – it wasn't dismissed, but it wasn't the focus of the meeting. And what's the timeline of the feasibility report? Fodrea asked. The Corps expects to complete that by this January, Wills replied. The goal is to get a prototype installed in time for the 2007 outmigration, Wills added. And does the current SCT spreadsheet reflect that schedule? Boyce asked. Yes, Kranda replied, adding that a The Dalles RSW is also still on the table.

3. SRWG Update.

Hevlin said SRWG is in the process of soliciting proposals, to meet the needs identified in the one-pagers. SRWG is planning on a meeting to review proposals in Walla Walla on August 31-September 3. Full proposals are due by August 2, although they are likely to come in somewhat later, said Boyce – we'll probably have a couple of weeks to review the proposals before the meeting.

At the last SCT meeting, said Hevlin, we talked about trying to do an RSW test at Lower Granite this summer. Ken Barnhardt checked with BPA to see whether funding might be available, and the answer was no, Hevlin said. Our thought was that if we do a test at Lower Granite, we want to use the water wisely, and get all of the data we can, said Barnhart – that did not appear to be possible in 2004. We need to be sure that is in the FY'05 study program for Lower Granite, said Hevlin. Kranda said he has added a line-item to the CRFM spreadsheet for a spring and summer radio-tracking study at Lower Granite. Boyce said it would be useful to include both spring and summer hydroacoustic studies to look at subyearling chinook passage at Lower Granite in 2005 as well; Hevlin agreed. Chuck Pevin suggested that sonic tags might be another option, in lieu of hydroacoustics.

4. FY'05 CRFM Program.

Hevlin went briefly through the changes to the RSW letter in response to comments on it at the last SCT meeting. He asked whether there were any further SCT comments on this new draft. Ron Boyce suggested that it may make sense to address the letter from the salmon managers to the Corps and BPA. Fodrea noted that what is proposed in this letter appears to be out of sync with the Corps' action plan. That's why we're asking for this letter, Dana Knutsen replied. In response to a question, Knutsen said draft documentation on the Snake/McNary decision analysis will be available later this year.

The group discussed the potentially huge impacts of an accelerated RSW construction schedule on future CRFM budgets; Boyce noted that this is one of the major challenges facing the SCT. My perspective is that RSW implementation will have to be phased, he said – there simply isn't enough money to do them all concurrently. In response to a question from Kiefer,

Fodrea said that, in her opinion, BPA cannot sign off on the RSW letter until they see the results of the Corps evaluation and the new version of the BiOp.

Can we wait and still be successful in getting two RSWs installed by the spring of 2007? Kiefer asked. That's unknown at this time, even without such a delay, Knutsen replied. Boyce noted that the decisions to proceed with RSW construction at Lower Granite and Ice Harbor have been made without such detailed analysis. If we included open-ended language to the effect that, if the studies continue to show positive results, and no higher priorities emerge, then the SCT recommends that accelerated Snake River RSW construction proceed, could BPA sign off on the letter? Kiefer asked. Again, I could not recommend that BPA sign off on this letter before seeing the results of the Corps' evaluation, Fodrea replied. She said she will discuss this topic with Barnhart and will report back to the SCT as soon as possible.

Ultimately, there was agreement that the SCT salmon manager representatives would be mailing the letter to the Corps, and Keifer and Hevlin would coordinate final comments on the letter.

The discussion then turned to the most recent version of the CRFM spreadsheet. Boyce asked that a line-item to begin substantive RSW work at McNary be added for FY'05; that work is currently not scheduled to begin until 2007. You want us to start plans and specs for RSW at McNary? Knutsen asked. Yes, Boyce replied. Kiefer suggested that it may make more sense to target this placeholder line-item at RSW construction in the Lower Columbia, rather than specifically at McNary. We can then let the SCT rank that new line-item, Kiefer said. Knutsen noted that there is currently a \$50,000 placeholder in the CRFM spreadsheet for McNary in FY'05, trending upward to \$21 million for RSW construction at that project in 2008.

Kranda reiterated that he has identified \$96 million in potential CRFM projects for FY'05; he recommended that the group attempt to reach agreement on a prioritized program totaling \$70 million, given the expected FY'05 CRFM budget after savings and slippage are deducted. He noted that, in the most recent edition of the spreadsheet (dated July 15), the current list of highest-priority items (those ranked 2 or below) totals \$70.3 million.

The group then devoted the remainder of today's meeting to the current spreadsheet, going through the highest-priority items line by line. The results of these deliberations are summarized below:

- 1. B2 surface bypass:** no change.
- 2. B2 DSM, monitoring and outfall:** no change.
- 3. Bonneville juvenile passage studies:** some question about the relative priority of the Bonneville studies, given the CRFM funding situation
- 4. Bonneville PH2 FGE:** no change.
- 5. Bonneville flat-plate PIT detector:** no change.
- 6. Bonneville PH2 AWS:** no change.
- 7. Bonneville adult PIT:** Some discussion on the relative priority level of this in '05.]

15. Ice Harbor RSW: no change.

16. Ice Harbor AWS: no change.

17. Ice Harbor survival/efficiency study: \$255,000 to close up the '04 survival studies

18. Ice Harbor PIT-tag detector – main transportation: no change.

21. John Day mitigation evaluation: no change.

22. John Day ladder jumping and holding: no change.

23. John Day configuration decision document and surface bypass placeholder: no change.

31. Little Goose extended-length screens: no change.

40. Lower Granite extended-length screens: no change.

48. Lower Monumental survival/efficiency study: Is this study needed prior to RSW construction? Not in IDFG's opinion.

49. Lower Monumental barge loading improvements: dewaterer: no change.

50. Lower Monumental RSW: keep in "white" area for now.

58. McNary gate and hoist rehab: no change.

59. McNary extended-length screens: no change.

60. McNary survival/efficiency study: no change.

61. McNary turbine survival above 1%: no change.

68. The Dalles spillway modifications: no change.

69. The Dalles spillway and sluiceway survival: IDFG commented that this will need cost scrubbing.

70. The Dalles surface bypass/forebay passage: IDFG commented that this will need cost scrubbing.

71. The Dalles decision document: no change.

72. The Dalles spillway improvements studies: IDFG commented that this will need cost scrubbing.

79. System high-flow PIT @B2 corner collector: add to Bonneville package

80. System investigate headburn: no change.

81. System adult passage AFEP: scaled-back radio-tag study

82. System RPA 179: no change.

83. System lamprey passage studies: needs to continue; species to be listed soon

86. System multiple bypass accumulated: no change.

87. System delayed mortality of juvenile salmonids: Upper Columbia steelhead "D" value study – out-years necessary?

88. System PIT-tag recovery – estuary and avian island: no change.

89. System fish ladder transition pool and weir modifications evaluation: to reduce delay at lower end of Lower Granite fish ladder; may not be a high priority, in IDFG's opinion, because this is not a significant issue in terms of conversion from Bonneville to Lower Granite; may not be as high a priority as some juvenile passage items

90. System evaluation of juvenile fish separators: no change.

91. System Snake/McNary decision document: supercedes line-item 95

92. System flood control study: Congressional approval will be needed to proceed once the recon-level study is completed

93. System adult passage temperature effects: ? more information needed on scope and goals of this study

104. Estuary avian predation: no change.

105. Estuary studies: \$6.3 million total cost needs to be broken down further, costs scrubbed

Fodrea said BPA would like to propose an add-on: a recon-level study of potential concepts for system spillway and turbine intake PIT-tag detection for FY'05. We'll get that on the Portland District FFDRWG agenda, said Hevlin. Fodrea asked that the Corps use the same design team that is working on the corner collector. Nic Lane asked whether it might be possible to build high-flow PIT-tag detection capability into an RSW design; Gary Fredricks replied that he doesn't believe it is technically feasible to detect passive tags through an RSW.

The group also agreed that the following line-items may be candidates for higher-priority ranking:

- 25 (John Day biological studies)
- 32 (Little Goose survival/efficiency study) (IDFG expressed the view that it doesn't make sense to conduct a survival/efficiency study prior to RSW construction; the Corps argued that baseline data is needed at this project)
- 38 (Little Goose RSW)
- 41 (Lower Granite surface bypass study)
- the Lower Granite spring/summer radio-tag study (included in the add-ons at the end of the spreadsheet)
- 65 (McNary adult PIT detectors) (may need additional funding in FY'05, in BPA's opinion)
- 67 (McNary RSW/BGS)
- 84 (System turbine passage survival Phase II) (but needs to be scrubbed and scope reduced)
- 94 (survival study methodologies)
- McNary separator (an add-on at the end of the spreadsheet).

Kranda said he will collect all of the high-priority items into a single list and will distribute it to the TMT membership within the next few days, in order to facilitate the salmon managers' prioritization discussion.

5. Next SCT Meeting.

The next SCT meeting was set for Thursday, August 26. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle, BPA contractor.